

3000 YEARS AGO - THE FASHIONS OF THE 400 IN ANCIENT GREECE

How They Kept
House and
Lived in Old
Greece in
the Days of
Homer.

FOUND, among the ruins of Mycenae, 3,000 years old, a razor, a hairpin and a safety pin!

There you have a bit of news to laugh at. Imagine beautiful Helen of Troy calmly fastening a shawl around her dainty shoulders by means of a safety pin, while Menelaus, her husband, stands before a mirror patiently shaving himself, maybe even ejaculating an un-Homeric blue streak as the razor slips into his royal skin!

Could fancy paint a droller picture? Yet attend to a message from pre-Homeric Greece. Read these tidings from Mycenae—a great city that was in ruins ere Rome was founded—and you will learn that which will make you stare and gasp and cry aloud in your wonderment.

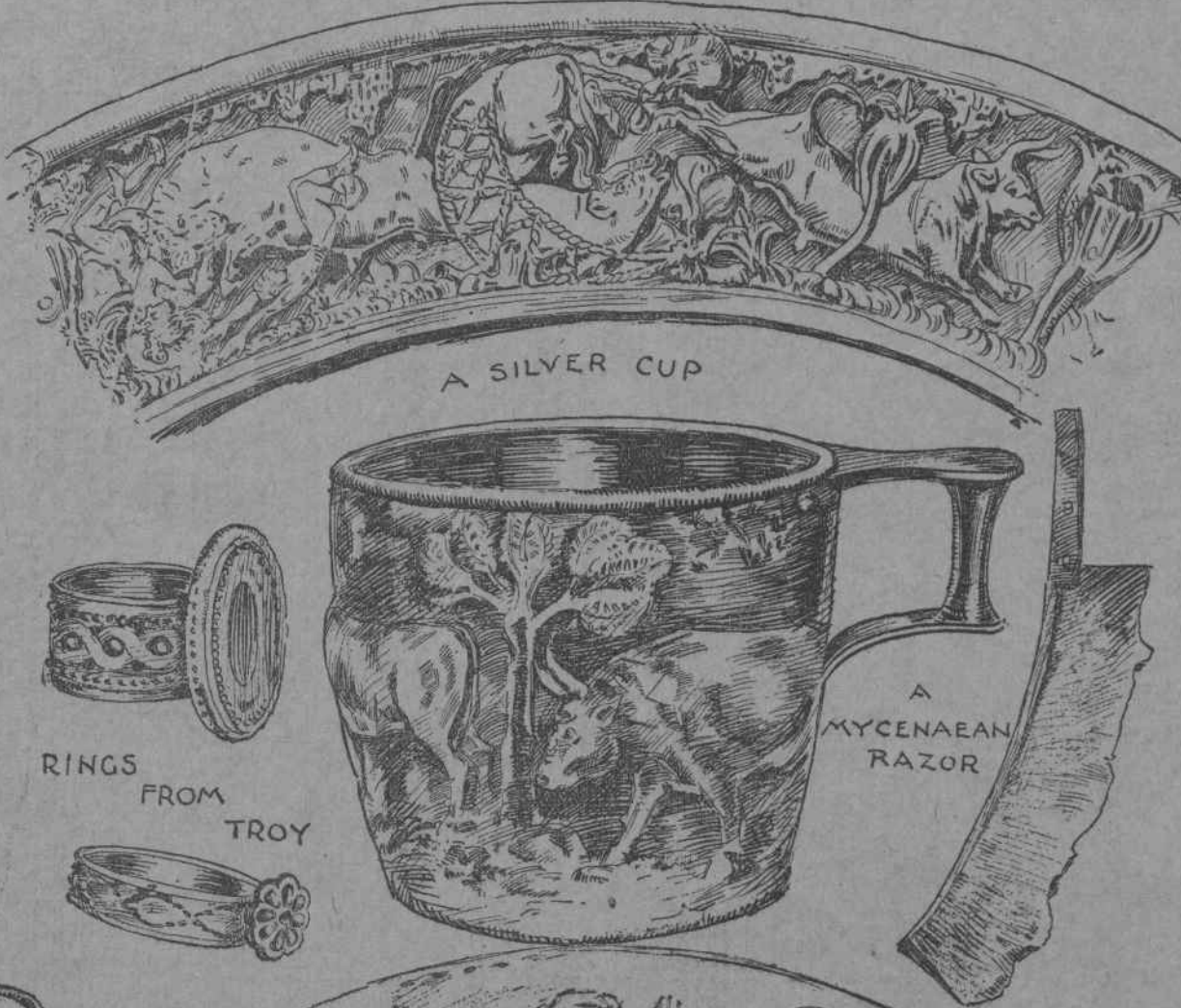
"Can there be anything new under the sun?"

From the press of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., there comes to the Sunday Journal

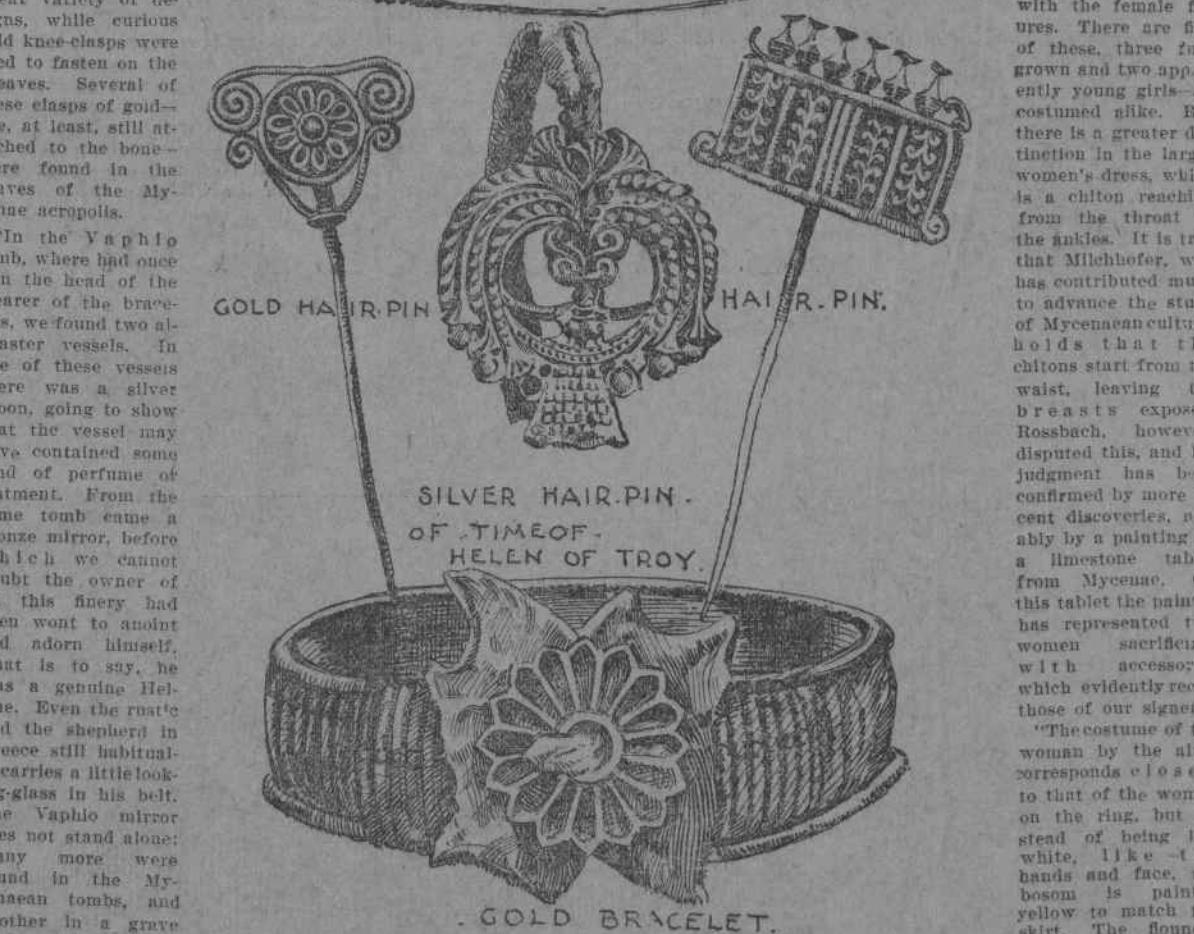
idol or an athlete, it certainly exemplifies the elementary costume of the race. The breechcloth, or loin apron, drawn between the legs and girded at the waist, is too sharply defined to require any description. This simple costume recurs again and again, notably on the Vaphio cups, where, however, the men's aprons appear to hang free from the belt. So on a solid red jasper ring found at Mycenae we have a cloaked man holding at arms' length two lions, one by the throat, the other by the heels. But in this case the belt-ends hang down almost to the man's knees, and the apron costume is supplemented by greaves strapped at knee and ankle, and by sandals turning up at the toes.

"This apron, now, is undoubtedly the primitive, and must have long remained the sole garment of the Mycenaean man, except as the cold compelled him to add the chlaina, or cloak, which was often nothing but the hide of a beast thrown over the shoulders. The apron leaves the limbs free play, and so we find it generally worn by men, not only in the Mycenaean age, but even on occasion by the later Hellenes.

"Decidedly later, and clearly of Eastern origin, is the chiton, or shirt, a cut and sewn linen garment which fits like an onion peel, in sharp contrast with the mere web of woollen girt about the loins as an apron or thrown over the shoulders as a cloak. We must regard the chiton as supplanting the apron by slow degrees, as foreign fashions are wont to work down gradually from the prince to the peasant. On the great Warrior Vase from Mycenae the new garment is excellently shown. It is worn alike by the six warriors we see saluting forth to battle and by the four in actual combat on the other side of the amphora. Again, in a wall-painting found at Mycenae, we have a man wearing a pale yellow chiton, but with very short sleeves, a form repeated in the case of the helmeted warrior at the bottom of the Siege Scene, and in other instances, so that this would seem to be the prevailing fashion.



RINGS FROM TROY



with the female figures. There are five of these, three full-grown and two apparently young girls—all costumed alike. But there is a greater distinction in the larger women's dress, which is a chiton reaching from the throat to the ankles. It is true that Milchofer, who has contributed much to advance the study of Mycenaean culture, holds that the chitons start from the waist, leaving the breasts exposed. Rosbach, however, disputed this, and his position has been confirmed by more recent discoveries, notably by a painting on a limestone tablet from Mycenae. On this tablet the painter has represented two women sacrificing, with accessories which evidently recall those of our signet.

"The costume of the woman by the altar corresponds closely to that of the women on the ring, but instead of being left white, like the hands and face, the bosom is painted yellow to match the skirt. The founes are black, another indication that these were not of a piece with the garment, but sewed on. The chiton, then, was a full dress, but with a noteworthy difference between the upper and lower parts. From the waist it falls rather free, and is relieved with several tucks or founes, while the space between these in the skirts of two of the larger women is filled with a sort of scale pattern. Over the bosom, however, the garment fits like an onion-skin, and is quite plain, so as to be readily mistaken for the naked breast. This lack of trimming appears to show that the jacket was of different material from the skirt.

"A second instructive design is likewise from a gold signet ring. This was found in a chamber tomb, along with other notable offerings, e. g., the bronze sceptre with the gilded knob, the ivory handle, portions of a girdle, etc. On this signet we have three women wearing chitons exactly alike, but differing somewhat from those just described—the skirt being divided into three horizontal sections, of which the two lower are disposed in very thick folds.

"On the bodice, again, we can distinguish neither ornament nor fold, so that here, too, we might suppose the breasts to be nude. Our third document is an engraved gem from the Vaphio tomb. The two women

en in this design are dressed in the same general style, namely, in the plain close-fitting bodice and wide skirt, but each of these skirts shows novel and curious details of trimming. A similar dress, but with interesting variations of detail, appears again on the ladies of the ivory mirror handles. These examples—and their number could be readily increased—confirm the view that the bodice was, generally at least, of different material from the skirt; but it is not so easy to determine whether bodice and skirt formed a single garment or two distinct ones. In the latter case there would be the more need of the girdle, which is quite clearly shown, especially on the smaller gold rings. Possibly either fashion may have been followed on occasion; but in any case we may conclude that they were in fact originally two distinct garments, the skirt being the principal one. And thus, by another way round, we arrive substantially at Milchofer's conclusion—namely, that the women's chiton was evolved by a gradual lengthening of the apron. In fact, it is not improbable that the apron formed the primitive dress of the women as well as the men, with the occasional addition of a separate breast cloth. A transition stage seems to be indicated in the design of a gold signet ring from Mycenae still unpublished. It represents a seated female, apparently a goddess, extending her hand to a man armed with a spear. The woman's chiton is short, reaching only to the knees. This is probably unique among the recovered monuments of Mycenaean art.

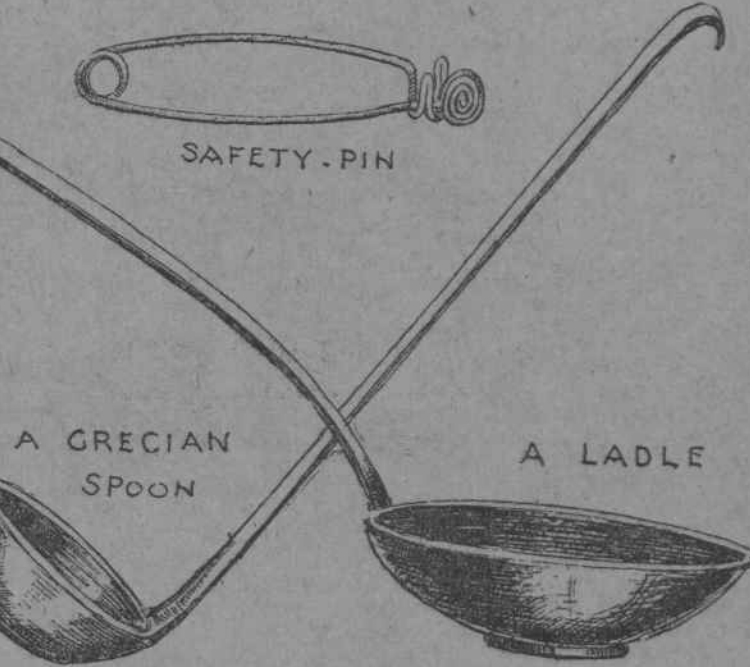
"Certainly the dress of the women on the great signet is very far removed from the primitive apron and the breast cloth, as here conceived; but chitons somewhat resembling those of our rings were worn in the Orient (especially in Assyria) from the earliest times, and it is very likely that the fashion there prevalent came—either by way of Phoenicia or of the countries lying still further north—to exercise an essential influence on the evolution of the costume

Wonderful
Finds in the
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cent, but for other uses there were also straight combs with finer teeth. These were of ivory or bone, occasionally of very hard white baked clay. They often bear reliefs and other decorations, and, of course, belonged to the men's toilet as well as the women's.

"The women's hair usually falls in several long slender braids, or a single heavy one. Sometimes the tress is curled up at the end, an effect doubtless assisted by the application of ointment. That ointments were in use, possibly the curling-iron as well, witness the little corkscrew curls which crown this woman's forehead, and which the Greeks so much affected in the age of archaic art.

"In the acropolis graves at Mycenae were found several gold ornaments which are thought by some to be earrings. This is not improbable in itself, though we know of no monuments—with a single exception—



of the Mycenaean women.

"There is little to show how the Mycenaean woman dressed her feet and head. The great signet leaves us in doubt whether the women wear shoes or only ankle bands; but on the second ring there seems to be no question about the shoes, (like the men's sandals) they turn up a bit at the toes. The monuments have as little to say about the head-covering. The women they present to us do not wear hats or bonnets, but only ribbons to bind and confine the hair.

"Of feminine ornaments we are better informed. Naturally the women would not be outdone by the men, and, in fact, we see from the monuments and the tomb offerings how they lavished on their persons now jewels of great price, and again trinkets of the cheapest kind. To begin with the head-gear, we observe that the ribbon used to bind and confine the hair was embroidered, so to speak, with gold and other glittering ornaments. In one of the Mycenaean chamber-tombs we found displayed about a skull 72 rosettes (37 of them gold, the rest of glass paste), as well as three other small gold trinkets and some two hundred round beads of gold and glass. These last may have composed a necklace, but the offerings all lay in such a way that the most of them appear to have adorned the ribbon which was wound several times round the head, the rosettes being in all probability so arranged that the gold would alternate with the glass.

"The diadem, too, belonged to a lady's outfit. In the women's graves of the Mycenaean acropolis were found a number of these splendid golden crowns. They are usually in the form of an elongated oval gold plate, richly ornamented in response work. Two of these, which were found still attached to the skull, may be taken as types of all. The first is a thick gold plate of the typical oval form, with a border made up of dotted parallels and spirals, and a central line of bosses, varying in size with the breadth of the diadem. This richly ornamented oval is surmounted by a still richer crest, composing a sort of garland of leaves and flowers, a distinction shared by no other of these diadems.

"An article of greater utility in the toilet was the hairpin. These were of various patterns and material—gold, silver, bronze—and occasionally of remarkable size. Some of them are wonderfully ornate, for example, that found in the grave, with the two splendid diadems described above, and taken at first for a brooch. It is a very thick silver pin, eight inches long—entirely too long for a brooch—with a semicircular ornament in gold, within which, as in a swing, is a female figure with outstretched arms. Several simpler gold pins were found—also with diadems—in another grave. The excavations at Troy yielded other fine specimens.

"The comb, too, was worn by Mycenaean ladies. A comb found in one of the graves is made of bone, but has the back plated with gold. It is not more interesting or appealing more forcibly to our sympathies than does the chapter upon how my lord and lady of Mycenae dressed.

which represent a woman with rings in her ears.

"It remains to say a word about certain articles of the toilet. Combs and ungents we have already mentioned, and we may add that in some of the chamber-tombs of Mycenae were found small bronze vessels, in all probability belonging to the female toilet, and used for warming or melting ointment for the face or hair. Along with them we found dainty little bronze knives, adapted to a variety of uses. Further, the ladies' toilet (perhaps the men's) included bronze or silver pinners, which appear to have been used for removing hairs from parts of the person where they were considered a blemish. Pinners, often exactly similar to the Mycenaean and supposed to have served the same purpose, are also found in Northern Europe in the graves of men and women of the bronze age. The Mycenaean also used earplugs, precisely like the modern article; we have one of silver from Vaphio, another of gold found at Mycenae.

"More important than all these are the mirrors. Like ancient mirrors in general, these are of bronze and consist of a disk, about six to eight inches in diameter, with a handle of wood, bone or ivory fastened on by two rivets. The disk, whose polished surface served the purpose of our looking glass, was quite plain, but the handle was often carved with rich and beautiful designs.

"After this toilet study we may now picture to ourselves the Mycenaean lady in full dress, with all her bravery on. Silks and satins she has none, but soft woolen of sea-purple stain, and glistering linen which, even without embroidery, might shine like a star in that radiant atmosphere. Her robes, to be sure, are in good part the poet's gift, but her jewels we have handled. Fairly smothered in golden jewelry, she is quite in keeping with her golden city. The diadem of gold is on her brow, golden fillets and pins of exquisite technique shining out of her dark hair; golden bands about her throat and golden necklaces falling upon her bosom; gold bracelets upon her arms, gold rings chased with indelible art upon her fingers, and finally her very robes agleam with gold. Thus she stands forth a golden lady. If we may borrow Homer's epithet for Aphrodite—an epithet chosen, we may believe, not only for her beauty's sake, but for the radiant splendor of her apparel. And, indeed, it was doubtless from Aphrodite's native Syria the Mycenaeans learned to overload themselves with gold. At least the Hebrew women appear to have followed the same flashy fashion, as we may gather from the Scriptures: 'Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel.'

Other chapters of this interesting book describe the arms and armor, the dwellings, the art, the religion and many other phases of the life of those ancient Mycenaeans, but none is more interesting or appealing more forcibly to our sympathies than does the chapter upon how my lord and lady of Mycenae dressed.

the advance sheets of a book that is about to appear, entitled "The Mycenaean Age; a Study of the Monuments and Culture of Pre-Homeric Greece." This book is the combined work of Dr. Christos Tsountas, Ephor of Antiquities and Director of Excavations at Mycenae, and J. Irving Manatt, professor of Greek literature and history in Brown University.

The book recounts the discoveries which have been made within the past three years among the ruins of ancient Mycenae. The work has been carried on quietly, and although from time to time archaeological students have heard of interesting finds, it remains for the Sunday Journal to give the general public an idea of what these explorers have accomplished.

The ruins of Mycenae lie about twenty-five miles southwest of the site of the ancient city of Corinth. It was an important city of ancient Greece, but as even the briefest outline of its history would fill a page of this newspaper, it is needless to say any more here than that Mycenae was once to Greece what Paris is to France.

To quote from the introduction of the book: "Until recently the Homeric poems were our sole source of light upon the civilization of the prehistoric or heroic age of Greece. But the picture which the poet gives us of the palaces and the light of that age appeared too fanciful to pass for transcripts of reality. For example, who could have believed that the palaces were actually (as Homer alleges) adorned with friezes of blue glass? But we know that, in essentials, Homer's pictures answered to reality."

Dr. Tsountas, in the course of his explorations, came across palaces, public edifices and private dwellings of high and low degree, in nearly all of which he found objects that threw light upon the mode of living of the ancient Mycenaeans. It was, however, in the tombs and graves that he made his most important discoveries.

The portion of his book which will arouse the greatest interest is that which deals with the dress and personal adornment of those ancient men and women. When you have read this chapter and have carefully studied its illustrations you will probably come to the conclusion that, after all, styles have not changed so very much.

Speaking of his discoveries in this field the author says: "These enable us to trace the evolution of dress from the primitive Aryan breechcloth to fashions which at least foreshadow the elegance of Ionian Greece. This observation, indeed, applies rather to the women—the gentleman in full dress being very little in evidence, except as the sumptuous funeral outfit speaks for him."

"One monument—the famous siege scene on the Silver Vase—shows us Mycenaean warriors in a state of absolute nudity defending their fortress walls with bow and sling; but this can hardly be typical of everyday life. We have a truer starting point for our study in the lead statuette found in a beehive tomb at Kampos in Laconia. Whether this be taken for an

"The warriors of the vase, again, wear something like sandals on their feet, and greaves of leather or cloth strapped about the knees and ankles. Such greaves or leggings were worn in peace as well as war. Homer makes old Laertes wear them at his farm work: 'He was clothed in a filthy chiton, with cloaked leggings of ox-hide bound about his knees, against the scratches of the thorns; and long sleeves (or mittens) over his hands, by reason of the brambles; and on his head he wore a goat-skin cap.' To this day the Greek rustics go 'well greaved.'

"The apron, or the chiton alone, was of course, inadequate as an all-the-year-round dress for any but the hardest. A necessary complement of either was the chlaina, or thick woollen cloak, reaching to the knees or even to the ankles, and doubtless worn habitually by the elders and in winter, at least, by the young men.

"This chlaina, which was neither fitted nor sewn, but simply the great thick woollen web as it came from the loom (always red or purple in Homer), was fastened at the shoulder by brooches, very much like the modern safety-pin. Several of these brooches have been found in the excavations at Mycenae, so far forth bearing out Herodotus's tale of the prehistoric Athenian ladies who stabbed to death with their brooches the sole survivor of the crew that had gone to Aegina. That was the end of brooch-wearing at Athens, the historian tells us, while the Argive and Aeginetan women forthwith began to wear their brooches half as big again.

"These Mycenaean brooches are all of bronze and of three different patterns. Examples are here reproduced. In the Salamis cemetery Mr. Kabbadlas found several bronze brooches resembling the earlier pattern, except that the bow is much more bent. Of one of these patterns Mycenae has thus far yielded but one brooch, to which we have now to add another from a rock-hewn tomb at Delphi.

"Shoes were evidently no every-day necessity in Mycenaean times, as they were not even in Socrates's day.

"The Mycenaeans often appeared bareheaded as well as barefooted; but the hair, worn long, was sometimes bound by a fillet. Thus the man on the second Vaphio cup has his hair gathered at the back of his neck in a ribbon, or (possibly) a ring, to keep it out of the way.

"For the rest, we know enough of the male toilet to justify the conclusion that the Mycenaean men were no less fond than the women of personal adornment, and that in that respect their outward appearance was quite Asiatic, not to say barbaric. Thus they wore on their wrists bracelets of gold—sometimes of precious stones carved with lifelike intaglios. In the Vaphio tomb, for example, we found two dozen engraved gems lying in two heaps where the hands of a man's skeleton must have lain. Men wore necklaces of gold, gems, glass and amber; rings of gold, bronze, iron and precious stone, and often two or three of them together. Moreover, their garments were spangled with goldleaf, or with round disks, and stamped with a

great variety of designs, while curious gold knee-clasps were used to fasten on the greaves. Several of these clasps of gold—one, at least, still attached to the bone—were found in the graves of the Mycenaean acropolis.

"In the Vaphio tomb, where had once lain the head of the wearer of the bracelets, we found two alabaster vessels. In one of these vessels there was a silver spoon, going to show that the vessel may have contained some kind of perfume of ointment. From the same tomb came a bronze mirror, before which we cannot doubt the owner of all this finery had been wont to anoint and adorn himself. That is to say, he was a genuine Helen. Even the rustic and the shepherd in Greece still habitually carries a little looking-glass in his belt. The Vaphio mirror does not stand alone; many more were found in the Mycenaean tombs, and another in a grave at Pronoia, near Nauplia. They are uniform in pattern and material, and differ only in the ornamentation of the handle.

"One more article of the male toilet must be mentioned here, namely, the razor. Four of these implements were found at Mycenae, and now five more have been found at Markopoulo, in Attica, and one in a tomb at Delphi. All of the Mycenaean razors are of bronze, and, as the reader will see, differ little in pattern from the razor of to-day, except that the blade does not open and shut—the handle being formed by riveting on to the shank of a bronze sheath of wood or bone. Actual tests show that the bronze blades take a keen edge and shave clean, though they, of course, do not wear as well as steel. The monuments teach us that the Mycenaean shaved only the upper lip, in this following a custom prevalent in the ancient East and persisting long afterward in Greece. Thus Ptolemy states on the authority of Aristotle that the Spartans, when on taking office, annually made proclamation to the citizens to shave their mustaches and obey the laws. In all probability the Greeks borrowed this custom from the Orientals, and that somewhat late in the Mycenaean age. At any rate it was not till then that it became general. For

